Annual Report 2014/15 and Service Plan 2015/16 - 2017/18

Annual Report 2014/15
and Service Plan 2015/16 - 2017/18

ELECTIONS BC
Province of British Columbia

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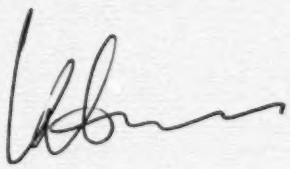
August 26, 2015

Honourable Linda Reid
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Province of British Columbia
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia
V8V 1X4

Dear Madame Speaker:

I have the pleasure to submit Elections BC's Annual Report for the 2014/15 fiscal year and Service Plan for the 2015/16 – 2017/18 fiscal years. This document reports on the activities Elections BC undertook between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015 in support of Elections BC's Service Plan and establishes Elections BC's goals and planned activities for the next three years. This report is filed in accordance with section 13(1)(a) of the *Election Act*.

Respectfully submitted,



Keith Archer, Ph.D.
Chief Electoral Officer
British Columbia

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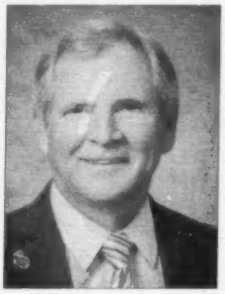
Message from the Chief Electoral Officer



I am pleased to present Election BC's Annual Report for 2014/15 and Service Plan for 2015/16 – 2017/18 to the Legislative Assembly.

On September 1, 1995, the amended *Election Act* established Elections BC as an independent office of the Legislature. The organization has experienced changes over the past 20 years and this year was no exception. In the spring 2015 session, the Legislative Assembly passed the *Election Amendment Act*, 2015, which affects various aspects of the organization and requires some adjustments to procedures.

The *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* gave my office the mandate to oversee local election campaign financing for the first time. The first event was the 2014 General Local Elections, November 15, 2014, and the work has continued with several by-elections and non-election assent voting held around the province. It was a very exciting and successful opportunity for our organization to adapt our proficiency in provincial electoral finance to the local election context.

Starting in May 2014, our organization began providing full administrative support to the BC Electoral Boundaries Commission, the first time we have done so. The Preliminary Report was issued in March 2015, and a Final Report will be presented in the fall. This administrative model provided significant cost savings to the commission, and will also yield efficiencies for Elections BC when new electoral districts are established by the Legislative Assembly.

In February 2015, the government issued a Regulation directing Elections BC to administer a vote-by-mail plebiscite to the 1.56 million registered voters in Metro Vancouver. Voter turnout in the 11-week voting period was 48.6%, and ballots were counted via optical scanning technology, another first for Elections BC.

Looking forward, it is time to begin preparing for the 2017 Provincial General Election and the 2018 General Local Elections. As demonstrated with the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite, our office also has to be prepared to deliver on-demand events. The Service Plan for 2015/16 – 2017/18 lays the groundwork for Elections BC to successfully administer recurring and on-demand events as the organization has done for the past 20 years.

I am confident that the work outlined in this plan will enable Elections BC to meet its goals and consistently provide responsible, independent, non-partisan electoral administration to the province of British Columbia.

Keith Archer, Ph.D.
Chief Electoral Officer
British Columbia
August 2015

The organization

Elections BC is an independent, non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for administering provincial general elections, by-elections, referenda, initiative petitions and recall petitions, and for overseeing the local campaign financing and third party advertising rules for local elections, by-elections and non-assent voting.

For operational purposes, the organization is divided into three streams comprising five program areas and six work units.

Chief Electoral Officer

The Chief Electoral Officer has overall responsibility for Elections BC and is the head of the Executive Services program area.

Executive Services

The Executive Services program area provides operational support to the Chief Electoral Officer, policy analysis and development, research and communications services to the organization, and is responsible for inter-jurisdictional liaison and collaboration, reporting to the Legislative Assembly, voter outreach and public education programs regarding voter registration and the electoral process.

Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Funding and Disclosure

The Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Funding and Disclosure, has overall responsibility for two program areas: Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration, and Information Technology.

Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration

Provincial Electoral Finance

The Provincial Electoral Finance work unit is responsible for legislation interpretation, compliance and enforcement and ensuring compliance with electoral financing law established by the *Election Act*. This includes the registration of political parties, constituency associations and third party advertisers and the review and audit of the financial reporting and expenditures of political parties, constituency associations, candidates, financial agents, proponents and opponents, MLAs and third party advertisers.

Local Elections Campaign Financing

The Local Elections Campaign Finance work unit was created in 2014 in response to Elections BC's new mandate under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, which received Royal Assent on May 29, 2014. This work unit is responsible for planning for and administering the campaign financing and third party advertising provisions for local elections, including ensuring compliance and enforcement of those provisions. This includes registering third party advertising sponsors, creating and providing disclosure statement forms and educational material for candidates, elector organizations and third party

advertising sponsors, receiving, reviewing, and publishing disclosure statements and providing support and advice to local election participants, administrators and the public.

Corporate Administration

The Corporate Administration work unit is responsible for the provision of financial and administration services to Elections BC including budget development, revenue and expenditure forecasting, financial accounting and control, financial reporting, contract administration, accounts processing, administrative services, and payroll for Elections BC's core group of public service employees and more than 33,000 temporary staff and election officials during various electoral events.

The work unit also manages Elections BC's warehouse and the warehouse's Inventory Distribution System. The warehouse contains all of Elections BC's election forms, guides, ballot boxes, voting screens and equipment for 85 district electoral offices and six satellite offices to be used during an event.

Human Resources and Development Services

Human Resources and Development Services provides the leadership, expertise and framework for human resource services for Elections BC's public service employees, 85 District Electoral Officers, 91 Deputy District Electoral Officers and more than 33,000 temporary staff and election officials. Responsibilities include planning and organizing the recruitment and selection of human resources, employee relations, training and development, occupational health and safety and all related human resource activities.

Information Technology

The Information Technology (IT) program area provides information management systems, computer infrastructure and technical services for Elections BC. The program area leads IT planning, develops and implements IT policies, procedures and standards, implements corporate IT projects and performs systems operations, administration, security and maintenance for 22 key computer applications, encompassing all aspects of electoral administration.

Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Operations

The Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Operations, has overall responsibility for two program areas: Corporate Planning and Event Management, and Voter Registration and Boundaries.

Corporate Planning and Event Management

Corporate Planning and Event Leadership

The Corporate Planning and Event Leadership work unit is responsible for effectively planning and leading electoral events, both scheduled and on-demand. This includes coordinating support activities across the organization and leading post-event reporting and evaluation. The work unit also has overall responsibility for strategic planning, performance measurement and risk management.

Elections BC's planning framework lays the foundation for the work of this unit. This project management methodology was designed by Elections BC to meet the unique requirements of delivering electoral events. It is used to plan, schedule and control the implementation of elections, by-elections, assent voting, referenda, plebiscites, recall petitions, and initiative petitions and votes.

Electoral Operations

This work unit is responsible for administering the electoral operations for all provincial events including elections, by-elections, referenda, plebiscites, recall petitions, and initiative petitions and votes. Electoral Operations manages Elections BC's 85 District Electoral Officers (DEOs) and their Deputies, who in turn administer elections in the field across the province, engaging over 33,000 election officials and other temporary staff for a provincial general election. Electoral Operations leads the training of DEOs and Deputies, and oversees the administration of candidate nominations, accessible voting, ballot counting and reporting of results.

A critical responsibility of the Electoral Operations team is the development and ongoing enhancement of a comprehensive and consistent training program for all election and voter registration officials in the field. Consisting of videos, reference guides, training workbooks and practical simulations, this training program is essential for ensuring that voter registration in conjunction with voting, voting, and vote counting are administered correctly, accurately and efficiently.

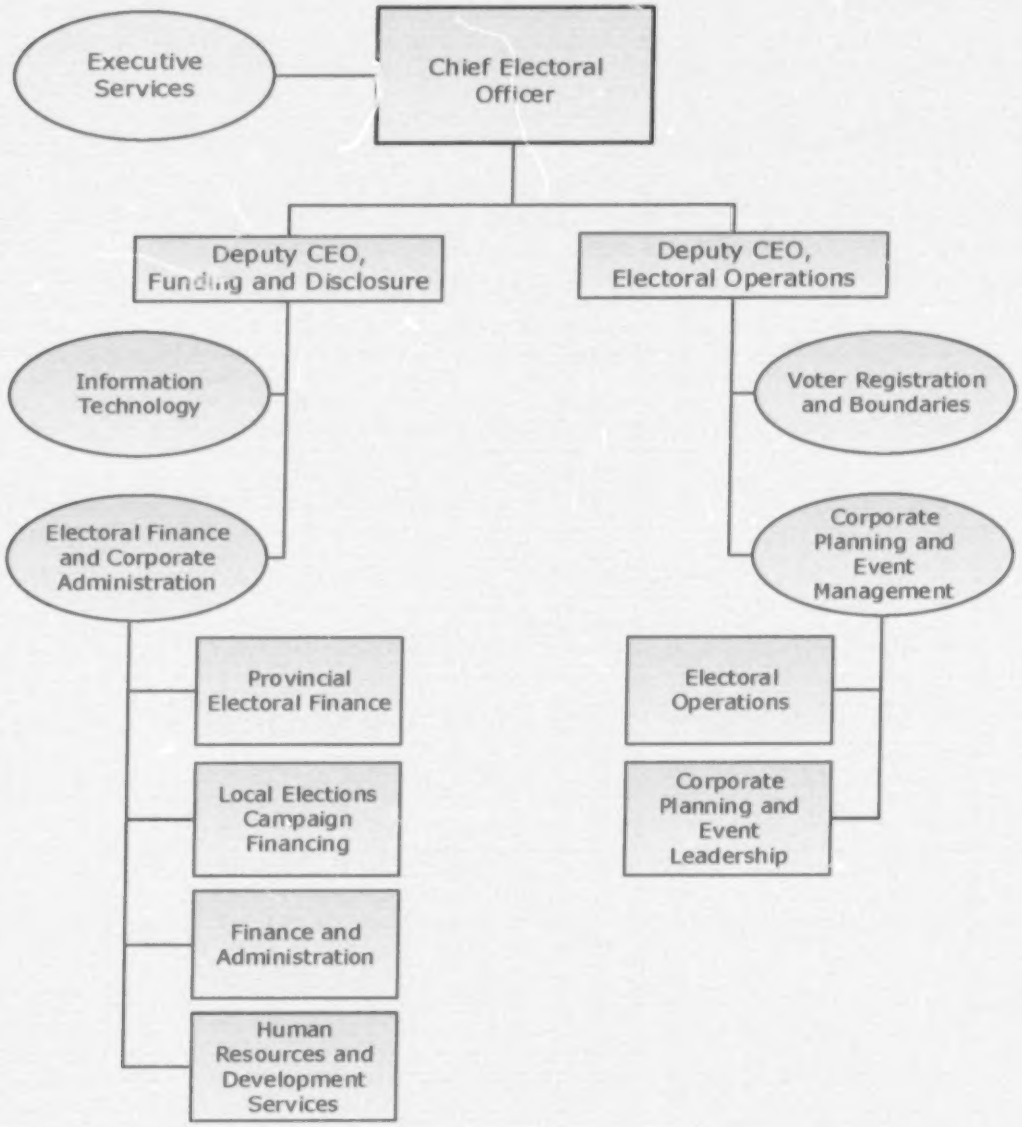
Voter Registration and Boundaries

The Voter Registration and Boundaries (VRB) program area is responsible for the provincial register of voters and for provincial electoral and administrative boundaries. VRB manages all voter registration services and coordinates voter data integration from external agencies including Elections Canada, BC

Vital Statistics, and the Insurance Corporation of BC. VRB manages voters list improvement activities including voter registration drives and enumerations, and produces and distributes the provincial voters list to Members of the Legislative Assembly, political parties, and candidates during an election and to local governments for electoral administration during local elections.

VRB produces and distributes a full suite of electoral geography products, including provincial electoral boundary maps, voting area maps and voting place maps. VRB is responsible for the maintenance and distribution of a provincial address registry and an electoral street index used to ensure voters are assigned to their correct electoral district and voting area.

ORGANIZATION CHART



BUSINESS CYCLE 2015-2018

2015
METRO VANCOUVER TRANSIT AND TRANSPORTATION PLEBISCITE
CEO REPORT ON THE 2014 GENERAL LOCAL ELECTIONS
FINAL REPORT OF ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION
ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES REDISTRIBUTION
GENERAL ELECTION AND ENUMERATION PREPARATION
2016
DEO/DDEO RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING BEGINS
VOTING AREA REDISTRIBUTION
REPORT OF THE CEO VISION 2021
PROVINCIAL ENUMERATION
2017
PROVINCIAL GENERAL ELECTION
May 9, 2017
STATEMENT OF VOTES AND STATUTORY REPORT OF THE CEO
CEO REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEGISLATIVE CHANGE
2018
CEO TERM ENDS
GENERAL LOCAL ELECTIONS
October 20, 2018
RECALL PETITION PROCESS AVAILABLE
NOVEMBER 2018
ONGOING ACTIVITIES
✓ MAINTAINING EVENT READINESS:
✓ LOCAL BY-ELECTIONS AND ASSENT VOTES
✓ PROVINCIAL BY-ELECTIONS
✓ REFERENDA AND PLEBISCITES
✓ INITIATIVE PETITIONS
✓ RECALL PETITIONS
✓ VOTER REGISTRATION AND UPDATES
✓ PROVIDING VOTERS LISTS TO MUNICIPALITIES, POLITICAL
✓ PARTIES AND MLAS
✓ LIAISING WITH FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL ELECTORAL OFFICES
✓ VOTER EDUCATION PROGRAMS
✓ RESPONDING TO PUBLIC INQUIRIES
✓ ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND CONSTITUENCY ASSOCIATIONS
✓ POLITICAL ENTITY REGISTRATION
✓ SERVICE PLANS AND ANNUAL REPORTS
✓ STRATEGIC PLANNING

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

With two years to go until the next provincial general election in 2017, Elections BC has been and continues to be in a state of heightened activity. During the past year, much of the organization's capacity was devoted to fulfilling our new mandate to administer the campaign financing provisions of local elections, preparing for the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite and transitioning to a new Information Technology (IT) service provider. In addition to these high priority activities, Elections BC continued to work on several projects started in 2013/14 aimed at improving the administration of elections and service to stakeholders. We remain confident that the new procedures and systems under development will be ready for implementation in the 2017 Provincial General Election.

Through a competitive process, Elections BC selected a new IT and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) service provider. During the period of transition, resources were shifted toward orienting the new provider to our systems and away from progress on specific information technology projects. The transition has provided an opportunity to examine current processes from a new perspective and we look forward to working with our new provider on the development of new information technology systems, as well as enhancements and support of existing systems.

Elections BC acted as the secretariat to the BC Electoral Boundaries Commission, providing administrative, communications, human resource, technical and subject-matter assistance to the commission in its work. While in the short term this shared-services model has resulted in Elections BC resources being re-assigned to the commission, the model will yield significant cost savings to the commission and will significantly reduce Elections BC's workload related to implementing new boundaries established by the Legislative Assembly.

Amendments to the *Election Act* were introduced in 2015. These amendments affect almost all areas of the organization and will require updates to systems, processes, our guidance documents, manuals and forms.

Along with these new priorities, Elections BC continues to ensure readiness for both local and provincial on-demand events. Elections BC has demonstrated its readiness in the administration of concurrent recall petitions in two electoral districts, campaign financing for nine local by-elections and assent voting, and preparations for the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite.

Much of Elections BC's focus in the coming year will be on planning and developing service delivery improvements for the 2017 Provincial General Election and 2018 General Local Elections.

Planning and performance

These statements and priorities from our 2015-2021 Strategic Plan will guide our work for the period 2015/16-2017/18.

VISION

To be leaders in electoral administration.

We realize our vision by:

- Respecting stakeholders – continuously striving to better respond to the diverse needs of our stakeholders
- Earning trust – administering processes in a professional and trustworthy manner
- Sharing and learning – sharing our expertise and collaborating to learn from others

MISSION

To serve democracy in British Columbia through the fair and impartial administration of electoral processes.

We realize our mission by:

- Upholding the fundamental principles of democracy in all that we do
- Ensuring equitable access to the democratic process

MANDATE

Elections BC is the independent, non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for administering electoral processes in British Columbia in accordance with the *Election Act, Local Elections Campaign Financing Act, Recall and Initiative Act,* and *Referendum Act.*

VALUES

Accountability	We take responsibility for our actions and decisions
Impartiality	We treat all voters, candidates, political parties, elector organizations and other stakeholders fairly
Innovation	We explore new ways to both improve service levels and make effective use of public funds
Transparency	We are open about how we work and communicate issues that may impact our stakeholders
Service Orientation	We strive to anticipate and meet the diverse needs of our stakeholders
Independence	We operate free from the influence of government and politics as we deliver our mandated responsibilities
Integrity	We are honest, and our decisions and actions are consistent with our values

By staying true to these values, we will earn and maintain the trust of British Columbians.

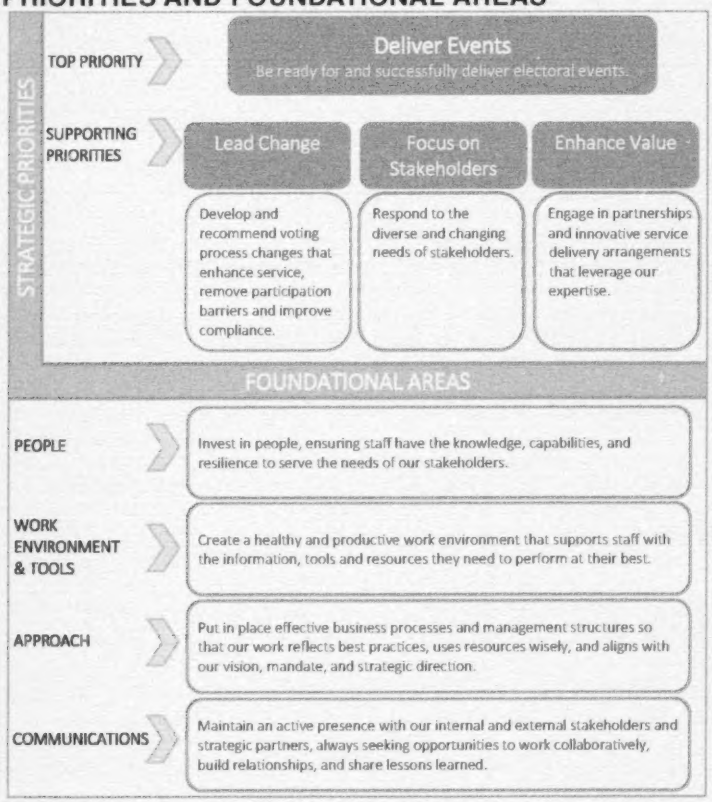
PRIORITIES

Elections BC is guided by four strategic priorities as it pursues its vision.

Being ready for and successfully delivering electoral events is Elections BC's top priority. The remaining three supporting priorities are considered to be equally important to one another in terms of achieving our mission. Together, these four priorities reflect who we are, the environment in which we operate and what we plan to achieve.

Elections BC has identified four foundational areas that are central to the successful pursuit of our strategic priorities. These foundational areas reflect an understanding that, to achieve our strategic priorities, our house must be in order. To be leaders in electoral administration, for example, we must first develop, and support our staff with the training and tools they need to be successful, apply best practices in our approach to work and communicate effectively both internally and externally.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND FOUNDATIONAL AREAS


STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
TOP PRIORITY
Deliver Events
Be ready for and successfully deliver electoral events.
SUPPORTING PRIORITIES
Lead Change
Focus on Stakeholders
Enhance Value
Develop and recommend voting process changes that enhance service, remove participation barriers and improve compliance.
Respond to the diverse and changing needs of stakeholders.
Engage in partnerships and innovative service delivery arrangements that leverage our expertise.
FOUNDATIONAL AREAS
PEOPLE
Invest in people, ensuring staff have the knowledge, capabilities, and resilience to serve the needs of our stakeholders.
WORK ENVIRONMENT & TOOLS
Create a healthy and productive work environment that supports staff with the information, tools and resources they need to perform at their best.
APPROACH
Put in place effective business processes and management structures so that our work reflects best practices, uses resources wisely, and aligns with our vision, mandate, and strategic direction.
COMMUNICATIONS
Maintain an active presence with our internal and external stakeholders and strategic partners, always seeking opportunities to work collaboratively, build relationships, and share lessons learned.

Elections BC is pursuing a number of strategies to achieve its priorities. To ensure that we stay on track, we set targets by fiscal year and measure and report on our performance annually against those targets. In 2014/15, Elections BC introduced a new set of strategic priorities and developed a number of new performance measures. The new measures are included in this report, but targets begin in 2015/16. A unique characteristic of Elections BC is that there is always a degree of uncertainty about the type and number of events that we will deliver in any given year. Progress against some of our performance measures can only be reported when we are called upon to deliver particular types of events. As such, in any given year, we may not be able to report against targets on all measures.

TOP PRIORITY

DELIVER EVENTS: Be ready for, and successfully deliver, electoral events

Delivering electoral events is the core business of Elections BC and our top priority. Everyone in the organization has a role to play in event delivery:

- Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration supports stakeholders to comply with contribution, spending and advertising rules and supports field staff in recruiting and paying temporary employees and election officials
- Information Technology develops and deploys information systems
- Corporate Planning and Event Management administers nominations, voting, counting and reporting of results
- Voter Registration and Boundaries manages voter registration, geographic activities and the provincial voters list
- Executive Services develops and implements public information programs and communications strategies

Fixed-date legislation for local and provincial general elections has made it easier for Elections BC to plan and stage the delivery of preparation activities for electoral events.

Elections BC is also responsible for on-demand events, the timing and number of which, during a given business cycle, are unpredictable. Examples of on-demand events include provincial by-elections, recall and initiative petitions, initiative votes, referenda and plebiscites, as well as local by-elections and assent voting.

Strategies:

- Develop effective plans and achieve targets without overworking staff
- Strive to maintain a high quality voters list throughout the business cycle
- Support political participants to understand filing requirements and promote compliance

Key performance indicators: Develop effective plans and achieve targets without overworking staff

Planning effectiveness: Percentage of event readiness and performance goals achieved during the reference period

Stress and workload: Percentile score relative to the BC Public Service on the Stress and Workload indicator from the Work Environment Survey

Performance indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Planning effectiveness*	85%	88.9%	85%	85%	86%
Stress and workload**	N/A	N/A	85th percentile	N/A	85th percentile

*The planning effectiveness indicator is calculated by comparing actual to planned completion dates in our event plans.

**The stress and workload indicator comes from the BC Public Service's Work Environment Survey, which is conducted every two years.

The planning effectiveness and the stress and workload indicators are viewed as joint performance indicators because both are necessary to assess progress toward the strategy to "develop effective plans and achieve targets without overworking staff." A planning culture was first introduced to Elections BC prior to the 2005 Provincial General Election and our maturity as a planning organization has grown steadily since then. We are focusing now on improving our planning processes so that event plans are effective and achievable given our resource and time constraints and without overworking staff.

Looking back

Event readiness and performance goals for 2014/15 included those related to the 2014 General Local Elections, the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite, and on-demand events. Of the 27 goals, Elections BC achieved 24 by the planned date, or 88.9%, exceeding the target of 85%.

In terms of stress and workload, the Work Environment Survey is conducted bi-annually and it was not offered in 2014/15. In 2013/14, Elections BC scored nine percentage points above the BC Public Service average and in the 85th percentile.

Looking forward

Next year Elections BC will report on the conduct and proceedings of the 2014 General Local Elections and the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite. Elections BC also will report on local by-elections and assent voting administered under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* and any other on-demand events with event milestones identified for 2015/16.

It is expected that the next Work Environment Survey will be conducted in 2015/16.

Key performance indicators: Strive to maintain a high quality voters list throughout the business cycle

Coverage: Percentage of voters on the list compared to the number of eligible voters in the province

Currency: Percentage of voters on the list at their current address

Net currency: Percentage of eligible voters on the list at their current address

Performance indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Coverage*	94%	92%	93%	92%	94%
Currency*	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	83%	89%
Net currency*	N/A**	N/A**	N/A**	76%	84%

*All voters list quality indicators are based on population projections or surveys conducted on behalf of Elections BC by an independent third party.
**Voters list quality surveys are conducted in conjunction with province-wide electoral events.

The provincial voters list is a list of the names and residential addresses of the voters registered in each electoral district. A high-quality voters list increases the effectiveness of Elections BC's voter information campaigns (e.g. Where to Vote cards) and improves the voter's experience by providing a streamlined voting process at the voting place. Voters list quality is a key performance indicator because a high-quality voters list is vital to the needs of Elections BC and its stakeholders.

Looking back

A variety of initiatives to improve the quality of the provincial voters list were undertaken in 2014/15. These included direct mailings to voters who registered a commercial post office box as their residential address and to voters who provided a birthdate different from the birthdate held on file with the Insurance Corporation of BC (ICBC). Voters who did not respond with a valid residential address were removed from the list. The names of voters who did not participate in any provincial electoral event for more than five years and did not update their ICBC information for more than five years were also removed from the list.

Voters list quality was also improved as a result of incorporating new registrations and voter record updates collected by 77 municipalities during the 2014 General Local Elections.

Looking forward

Voters list quality will improve in 2015/16 due to the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transportation and Transit Plebiscite. Close to 50% of the 1.56 million registered voters in Metro Vancouver voted during the plebiscite, and many updated their registration information. As well, more than 11,000 voters registered during the event. Looking further ahead, work has started on planning for a provincial enumeration to be conducted prior to the next provincial general

election in May 2017. This enumeration will include a mailing to every residential address in the province and targeted activities, including door-to-door visits in selected high-mobility regions of B.C.

Key performance indicators: Support political participants to understand filing requirements and promote compliance

Provincial filing compliance: Percentage of total provincial financing reports (such as annual reports and event-related reports) filed by the legislated filing deadline compared to the total number of reports due in the reference fiscal year

Local filing compliance: Percentage of total local financing reports (disclosure statements for candidates, elector organizations, and third party advertising sponsors) filed by the legislated filing deadline compared to the total number of reports due in the reference fiscal year

Filing requirements understanding: Percentage of training participants who agreed that the Electoral Finance Information session helped them to understand the legislated filing requirements

Performance indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Provincial filing compliance*	95%	100%	95%	95%	95%
Local filing compliance*	95%	99.6%	95%	95%	95%
Filing requirements understanding**	N/A	N/A	85%	85%	85%

* Filing compliance indicators are calculated based on Elections BC administrative records.
** Data for the filing requirements understanding indicator comes from surveys conducted with participants in Electoral Finance Information sessions.

The number of reports filed by the deadline in the filing compliance indicators includes reports that were filed by the late filing deadline. Entities that were granted extensions by Order of the Chief Electoral Officer to the filing deadlines for extenuating circumstances are considered to have filed on time.

To support political participants to understand their filing requirements, Elections BC conducts information sessions at various locations around the province in the lead-up to a major event or filing deadline. No such sessions were held in 2014/15.

Looking back

Of the 151 provincial financing reports required to be filed by the applicable deadlines during 2014/15, 149 clients filed their reports by the initial filing deadline. The remaining two clients filed their reports by the late filing deadline.

Of the 3,627 local financing disclosure statements required to be filed by the applicable deadlines during 2014/15, 3,606 clients filed statements by the initial filing deadline. An additional six clients filed their statements by the late filing deadline. There were 15 candidates who failed to file their required disclosure statements. They are disqualified from being nominated for, elected to, or holding office on a local authority until after the 2018 General Local Elections.

Looking forward

Based on historical trends, Elections BC expects provincial and local filing compliance ratios of at least 95% in each of the next three fiscal years, although a slight decrease in the ratio in the year after a general election can be anticipated. Elections BC will continue with efforts to influence the filing of financial reports by the legislated deadlines.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY

LEAD CHANGE: Develop voting model changes that enhance service, remove participation barriers and improve compliance

Elections BC is responding to the challenges emerging with the current voting model as a result of changing voting behaviour. Our focus is on improving service to voters, candidates and political parties, reducing barriers to participation and simplifying procedures to improve compliance. We are pursuing this priority within the current legislative framework and through the development of a proposed new voting model and proposals for legislative change.

Strategies:

- Revise voting process to enhance service and improve compliance
- Improve voting place accessibility
- Develop a new voting model for 2021

Key performance indicators: Improve compliance with provincial voting procedures

Unopened certification envelopes: Percentage of certification envelopes that remain unopened at final count

Write-in ballots rejected: Percentage of write-in ballots rejected

Performance Indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Unopened certification envelopes*	N/A	N/A	3%	3%	3%
Write-in ballots rejected*	N/A	N/A	2%	2%	2%

*Data for these indicators is sourced from administrative records.

Elections BC is focusing its efforts to improve compliance on absentee voting because this is the most procedurally complex part of the voting process and presents the greatest training challenge. Errors on the part of election officials or voters can result in votes being set aside prior to counting, or in ballots being rejected, in order to protect the integrity of the election.

The rate of unopened certification envelopes as an indicator of compliance with absentee voting procedures is growing in importance as the popularity of absentee voting increases. In 2005, 5.0 percent of certification envelopes remained unopened due to election official or voter error; in 2009, the rate was 6.8 percent, and in 2013, 6.9 percent remained unopened. Election officials administering absentee voting must confirm the voter's registration is

correct and recorded accurately on the certification envelope. They must then ensure the voter signs the required declaration in order for the envelope to be accepted for counting. This performance indicator does not include certification envelopes used for vote-by-mail, as these are completed entirely by the voter with no assistance from an election official.

Another key indicator of compliance with absentee voting procedures is the proportion of write-in ballots rejected. A higher proportion of write-in ballots are rejected than ordinary ballots.[1] Election officials work with voters to identify their electoral district of residence and to provide them with the correct list of candidates to use when marking a write-in ballot. In 2013, 4.0 percent of write-in ballots were rejected. Only 1.1 percent of ordinary ballots issued for absentee voting, and 0.4 percent of ordinary ballots issued for non-absentee voting were rejected.

Looking back

In 2014/15, Elections BC worked on enhancements to election official training and the application of technology to absentee processes in an effort to improve compliance with absentee voting procedures.

Looking forward

If called to administer a provincial by-election in 2015/16, Elections BC will report on the percentage of certification envelopes that remain unopened and the rejection rate for write-in ballots. For future provincial general elections, Elections BC plans to implement changes to voting processes aimed at reducing the percentage of certification envelopes that remain unopened at final count and the rate of rejection for write-in ballots. Modified voting procedures may be tested in a by-election prior to the 2017 Provincial General Election.

Key performance indicator: Develop a new voting model for 2021

Performance indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target
New voting model recommendations submitted to Legislature	N/A	N/A	Complete

Elections BC plans to submit a report to the Legislative Assembly proposing a new voting model for the 2021 General Election. The goal is to develop a voting model that is sustainable over the long term and that addresses systemic concerns about election official recruitment, compliance, and service to stakeholders while respecting fundamental principles of democracy.

The target is to submit this report to the Legislative Assembly by the end of 2016.

1 Ordinary ballots list the names of the candidates in the electoral district and voters mark the ballot with a cross or a tick mark beside the candidate's name. Write-in ballots provide a blank space for voters to print the name of the candidate or political party of their choice.

Looking back

In 2014/15, Elections BC developed its Vision 2021 concept for a new voting model. Several stakeholder groups were consulted on the concept including former District Electoral Officers, members of the Election Advisory Committee, and political parties.

Looking forward

Refinements to the Vision 2021 concept and stakeholder consultations will continue in 2015/16. A report on the new voting model and associated recommendations for legislative change will be delivered to the Speaker for consideration by the Legislative Assembly.

Key performance indicator: Improve voting place accessibility

Accessibility: Percentage of general voting places meeting minimum standards for wheelchair accessibility

Performance indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Accessibility	N/A	N/A	85%	90%	90%

*Data for this indicator is sourced from administrative records.

The accessibility indicator tracks the percentage of voting places used for general voting that meet Elections BC's minimum standard for wheelchair accessibility. Currently, for a general voting place to be considered accessible to wheelchair users, it must have handicap parking, paved pathways or wheelchair ramps, and a wheelchair accessible entrance.

1,270 of 1,510 general voting places used in the 2013 Provincial General Election, or 84%, met Elections BC's minimum standard for accessibility. Per current policy, 100 percent of advance voting places and district electoral offices meet Election BC's standards for accessibility.

Looking back

In 2014/15, there were no provincial events in which voting places were used for general voting.

Looking forward

If called to administer a provincial by-election in 2015/16, Elections BC will report on the accessibility of general voting places.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY

FOCUS ON STAKEHOLDERS: Respond to the diverse and changing needs of stakeholders

Elections BC will actively engage with stakeholders to identify and respond to their needs. We are committed to developing services that meet stakeholder needs while respecting our mandate and budgetary constraints. Technological advancements and changing service models outside the electoral arena have fueled changes in stakeholders' expectations regarding the quality, speed and types of service an electoral agency should provide.

Strategies:

- Enhance the range of online self-service options available to stakeholders
- Put stakeholder needs first when designing services

Key performance indicator: Enhance the range of online self-service options available to stakeholders

Performance indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Increased online services	N/A	N/A	Expanded eligibility for use of online voter registration	N/A	Candidate e-filing option in place

Elections BC will continue to develop and enhance the range of services it offers online. This work responds to stakeholder needs and is made possible by advancements in technology, digital authentication, and growing rates of computer and mobile device ownership.

Looking back

During the past year, Elections BC began developing a system to allow candidates to file their election financing reports online in the 2017 Provincial General Election.

Looking forward

In 2015/16 Elections BC intends to expand the types of acceptable credentials that voters may use for online and telephone registration. Elections BC will launch the candidate e-filing system in conjunction with the 2017 Provincial General Election. In addition, Elections BC will continue to offer the online "Know Your Electoral District" application and VoteBC application, which allows voters to locate the closest voting place using their mobile device. Elections BC is also planning to develop a voter portal through which voters will be able to securely access a variety of current and new online services.

Key performance indicator: Put stakeholder needs first when designing services

Satisfaction: Percentage of respondents satisfied or very satisfied with Elections BC service

Performance indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Satisfaction	80%	81.4%	80%	80%	80%

* Data for this indicator was sourced from a survey of local candidates and financial agents conducted by Elections BC.

We are developing services and products that are shaped more by stakeholder needs and less by the administrative needs of Elections BC. Feedback from voters and other stakeholders is the ultimate indicator of our success in this area. Following a provincial general election, Elections BC surveys voters and non-voters. In the other three years of the business cycle, we survey other stakeholders, such as financial agents and users of our online voter registration system. Elections BC looks for improvement relative to the previous year or the previous time a given stakeholder group was surveyed.

Looking back

In 2014/15, Elections BC surveyed candidates or their financial agents that participated in the 2014 General Local Elections to determine their satisfaction with the services provided by Elections BC during this inaugural event.

Looking forward

In 2015/16, Elections BC will survey financial agents appointed for provincial political parties and constituency associations to determine their satisfaction with the services provided by Elections BC.

Client satisfaction

"Thank you for the confirmation, and for all your assistance in accurately completing the registration update." – Provincial Constituency Association

"Thanks very much for your comprehensive response to my inquiry. Great to see the safeguards that are in place through Elections BC." – Voter

"In an age of declining satisfaction with public and private service personnel, Elections BC staff have been a breath of fresh air and renewed my belief that service to the public is honourable work and there are still some who understand that and live that." – Local Elections Financial Agent

"Answered questions kindly, patiently and completely. It was my first time running for council and some of the terminology was foreign to me- I never felt like I was asking silly questions. The staff went above and beyond." – Local Elections Candidate

"The landscape is not complicated, but it is detailed. Staff provided me confidence to move forward given the answers which were clear and concise." – Local Elections Financial Agent

Melissa Lackey @soccermissy23 · Feb 27
Had a mind-blowingly great time at #DemocracyBootcamp. Thank you @CIVIX_Canada and @**ElectionsBC**! I feel spoiled.

Student Vote @studentvote · Nov 4
@**ElectionsBC** Thank you for all your support!

Janni Aragon, PhD @janniaragon · Feb 23
Thank you @**ElectionsBC** for some good data. Appreciate it.

SUPPORTING PRIORITY

ENHANCE VALUE: Generate value for British Columbians by engaging in partnerships and innovative service delivery arrangements that leverage our expertise

Elections BC is the province's window into the world of election administration. We are engaged to think about these issues every day; to understand current research, trends and best practices in other jurisdictions; and, to ensure that this expertise benefits our citizens and provides the best advice possible to policy makers. We are committed to partnering with other organizations or stakeholder groups to achieve efficiencies and enhance the contribution we make to the promotion of democracy in B.C.

Strategies:

- Partner with the BC Electoral Boundaries Commission to share resources and expertise, while generating cost-savings
- Develop closer ties with post-secondary and secondary schools in B.C. to enhance voter registration and promote participation in elections
- Participate in and facilitate discussions about democracy and electoral administration

Key performance indicator: Partner with the BC Electoral Boundaries Commission to share resources and expertise, while generating cost-savings

When the British Columbia Electoral Boundaries Commission was appointed in May of 2014, Elections BC saw an opportunity to create significant efficiencies for both organizations and, ultimately, the taxpayers of B.C. A shared-services model was used, with the commission housed at Elections BC headquarters and Elections BC providing financial, human resource, administrative, technical and subject matter expertise.

The benefits of this partnership go beyond cost savings. The arrangement has allowed the commission to work more efficiently and complete its work six weeks ahead of schedule. Elections BC will realize efficiencies when boundaries passed by the Legislative Assembly are incorporated into our systems.

Key performance indicator: Participate in and facilitate discussions about democracy and electoral administration

Number of presentations: Number of presentations made by senior staff to external audiences

Performance Indicator	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Actual	2015/16 Target	2016/17 Target	2017/18 Target
Number of presentations	N/A	24	20	20	20

Elections BC is committed to participating in and facilitating discussions about democracy and electoral administration. Presentations are on topics relating to our core mandate, specific electoral events, and electoral administration more broadly. These discussions are facilitated by senior staff who make a number of presentations to outside groups each year. Our staff are often invited back to the same event or organization on a recurring basis.

Looking back

Twenty four presentations were made this past year, including a lecture to a first-year political science class, a presentation by the Chief Electoral Officer to the Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy, and conference presentations on project management in an electoral context.

Looking forward

We will continue to look for and engage in opportunities to share our expertise, and to collaborate with and learn from others.

Elections BC finances

Looking back (2014/15)

ELECTIONS BC BUDGET PROCESS

The mandate of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services includes considering and making recommendations on the annual reports, rolling three-year service plans and budgets of Elections BC. During the budget process each fall, Elections BC meets with the Committee and presents our budget proposal for the next fiscal year and the following two fiscal years.

As part of the annual budget development process, the Chief Electoral Officer and Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Funding and Disclosure met with the Committee on November 25, 2014. Elections BC provided the Committee with a comprehensive review of the financial results for the previous fiscal year and a budget proposal for fiscal years 2015/16 to 2017/18. The proposal detailed the budget requirements for ongoing operations and capital investments and event funding needed for preparations for the next electoral boundaries redistribution, enumeration and provincial general election. It also included an event funding request for monies necessary to complete compliance reviews and other close-out work related to the 2014 General Local Elections.

In its report of December 15, 2014, the Committee recommended that Elections BC's ongoing (non-event) operating budget for fiscal year 2015/16 be $9,385,000. The recommended capital budget for 2015/16 was $700,000 and the event funding recommendation was $1,695,000.

The activities of Elections BC are driven by the legislation it administers and the associated actions of its clients. The timing of by-elections, recall petitions, initiative petitions and other electoral events are not controlled by Elections BC. The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services recognizes that the budget needs of Elections BC are demand driven and has established a process whereby the Chief Electoral Officer advises the chair of the Committee in writing when additional funds are required to administer on-demand electoral events. This process has been followed for all electoral events since 2002.

The same process was used in 2014 to request funding for Elections BC's new mandate under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. The Chief Electoral Officer wrote to the chair of the Committee in March 2014, requesting funding of $150,000 to continue preparations necessary to ensure Elections BC would be ready to implement and administer the potential new *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. Subsequent to meeting with the Chief Electoral Officer and Deputies on April 10, 2014, the Committee approved the request.

After the Legislative Assembly passed the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* in May 2014, the Chief Electoral Officer and his Deputies again met with the Committee and requested new funding of $2,969,000 to administer the new legislation, including the 2014 General Local Elections to be held in November 2014. The Committee approved the request.

The ongoing operating and event funding table (page 28) shows Elections BC's budget for fiscal 2014/15 and the actual expenditures for that year. These amounts include funding and expenditures for ongoing work and for events conducted in 2014/15.

The summary ongoing financial outlook table (page 31) illustrates the budgets and planned budgets for ongoing work for each of the three fiscal years beginning in 2015/16. The Select Standing Committee has approved these amounts. Funding for electoral events is not included here.

Ongoing operating and event funding

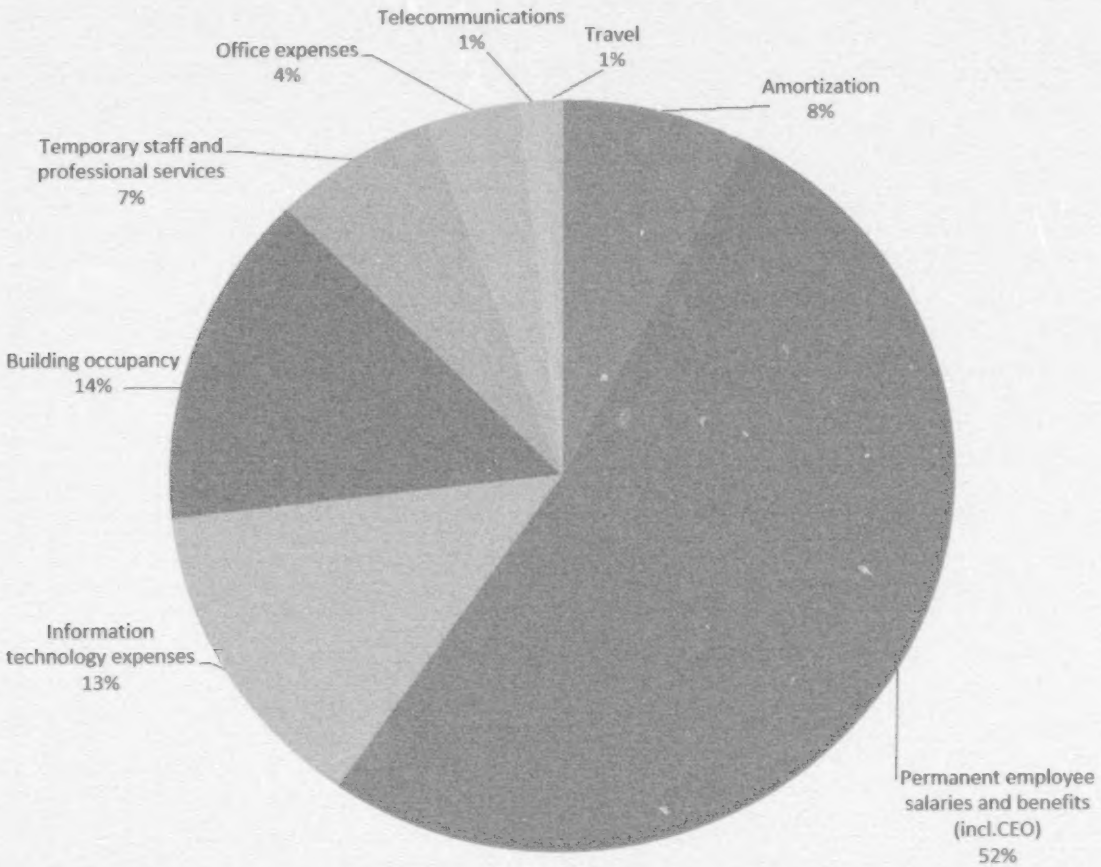
	2014/15 Budget $	2014/15 Actual $	Variance $
Funding			
Estimates (Note 1)	8,210,000	8,210,000	-
Other authorizations (Note 2)	4,704,736	4,704,736	-
Total funding	12,914,736	12,914,736	-
Expenses (Note 3)			
Salaries and benefits	3,880,000	4,161,323	(281,323)
Amortization	667,000	656,324	10,676
Building occupancy charges	1,011,000	1,224,147	(213,147)
Office expenses and telecommunications	469,000	496,077	(27,077)
Corporate information systems	1,103,000	1,061,178	41,822
Event readiness	10,000	90,185	(80,185)
Address and boundary maintenance	183,000	125,937	57,063
Voters list maintenance	180,000	79,343	100,657
Political entity reporting	354,000	207,811	146,189
Officer salary and benefits	337,000	336,736	264
Voter education	16,000	57,052	(41,052)
Events	4,704,736	-	4,704,736
2014 General Local Elections campaign financing	-	1,396,310	(1,396,310)
2015 Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation Plebiscite	-	3,022,313	(3,022,313)
Total expenses	12,914,736	12,914,736	-

Note 1 - The ongoing (non-event) operating budget for 2014/15 was $8,210,000.

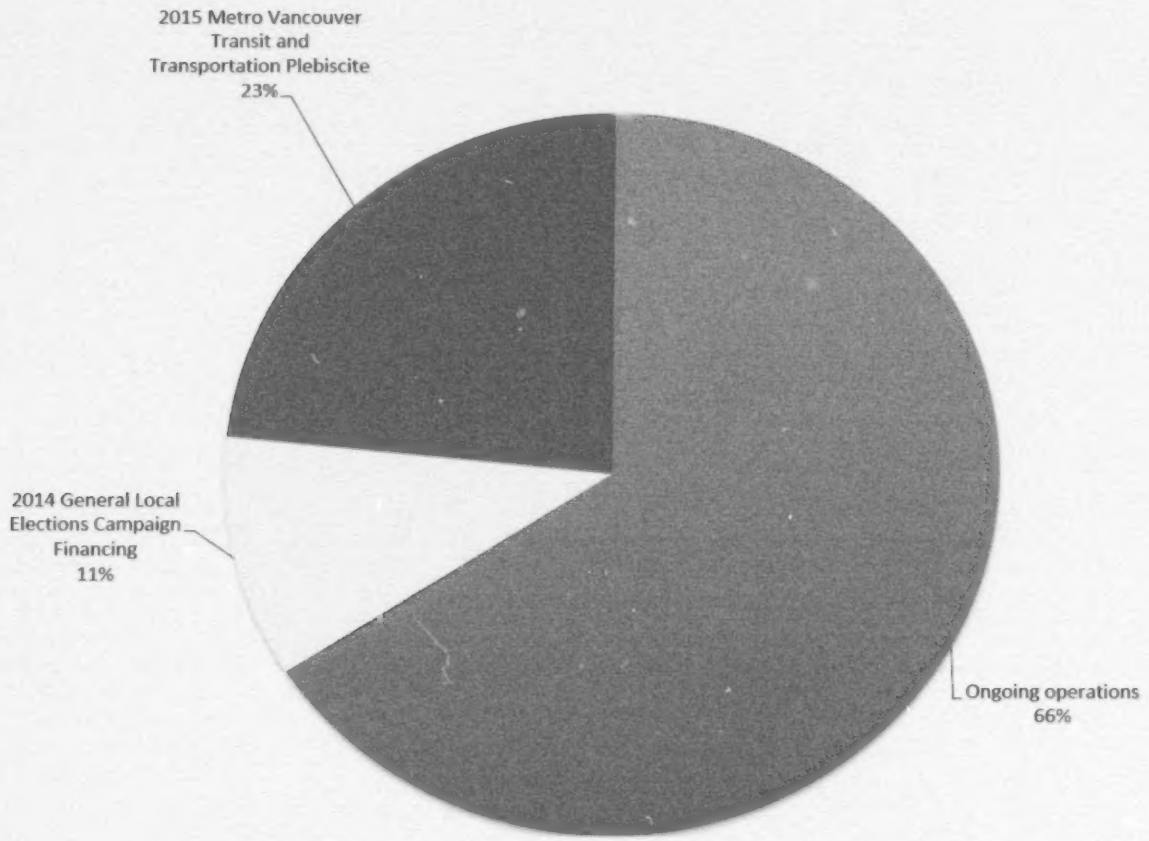
Note 2 - Other authorizations represents Elections BC's Statutory Appropriation (within Vote) and contingencies vote for implementing ongoing responsibilities related to the new mandate under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, and administering the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation Plebiscite and campaign financing for the 2014 General Local Elections.

Note 3 - The budget is based upon anticipated activities at the beginning of the year and does not include reallocations of budget made during the fiscal year, hence actual expenses differ from the budget.

2014/15 Ongoing operating actual expenditures by type



2014/15 Actual expenditures for ongoing operations and events


2015 Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation Plebiscite 23%
2014 General Local Elections Campaign Financing 11%
Ongoing operations 66%

Looking forward (2015/16 - 2017/18)

The summary ongoing financial outlook illustrates the operating and capital budgets for 2015/16 and planned budgets for 2016/17 and 2017/18. The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (SSCFGS) has approved these amounts. Funding for electoral events is not included here.

Summary ongoing financial outlook

	2015/16 (budget) $	2016/17 (planned) $	2017/18 (planned) $
ONGOING OPERATING COSTS			
Approved budget by SSCFGS	9,385,000	9,385,000	9,385,000
Total funding for ongoing operating costs	9,385,000	9,385,000	9,385,000
Expenses for ongoing core services			
Salaries and benefits (Note 1)	4,819,000	4,819,000	4,819,000
Amortization (Note 2)	786,000	874,000	757,000
Building occupancy charges (Note 3)	1,183,000	1,183,000	1,183,000
Office expenses and telecommunications (Note 4)	606,000	500,000	626,000
Corporate information systems (Note 5)	1,191,000	1,191,000	1,191,000
Event readiness (Note 6)	10,000	10,000	10,000
Address and boundary maintenance (Note 7)	74,000	74,000	74,000
Voters list maintenance (Note 8)	124,000	124,000	124,000
Political entity reporting (Note 9)	203,000	214,000	205,000
Officer salary and benefits (Note 10)	337,000	337,000	337,000
Voter education (Note 11)	52,000	59,000	59,000
Total expenses for ongoing operating costs	9,385,000	9,385,000	9,385,000

See the following pages for detailed information on notes 1 - 11.

	2015/16 (budget) $	2016/17 (budget) $	2017/18 (budget) $
CAPITAL ASSETS			
Approved budget by SSCFGS			
Computer hardware, servers and related software	700,000	700,000	700,000
Total funding for capital assets	700,000	700,000	700,000
Expenditures for capital assets			
Computer hardware, servers and related software	700,000	700,000	700,000
Total expenditures for capital assets	700,000	700,000	700,000

Note 1 - The salaries and benefits line includes salaries and benefits for Elections BC's permanent employees, including salaries and benefits to support our increased mandate for local elections. Employees are paid in accordance with policies established by the BC Public Service Agency.

Note 2 - Amortization is the allocation of the cost of a capital asset over its estimated useful life, and it is closely tied to capital spending. The major contributors to amortization are capital investments made in the Electoral Information System (EIS), Financial Reports and Contributions System (FRPC) and other information systems. For example, the figure in the capital budget represents the actual cost for 2015/16; however, that actual cost must also be paid for out of the operating budgets over a number of years. Amortization rates are government policy established by the Office of the Comptroller General, and Elections BC does not have flexibility to change them.

Note 3 - Building occupancy charges are rental charges for office and warehouse space. This line item includes additional office space to support our increased mandate for local elections.

Note 4 - Office expenses and telecommunications include telephones, supplies, equipment, postage, courier, bank charges, staff training, travel, legal fees and statutory advertising including increased office and telecommuncations expenses to support local elections.

Note 5 - Corporate information systems include technology services which have been outsourced to an external contractor, such as support of Election BC's servers and applications; maintenance and minor improvements to applications such as the Electoral Information System, the Online Voter Registration System, the Financial Reports and Political Contributions System and the Recall and Initiative Verification System; and support for technical infrastructure such as shared file storage, printing, firewalls, servers, workstations, local area networks, backup and recovery, and office automation software.

Also included in this budget line is the cost of email accounts; a portion of network costs; licensing and maintenance fees for various software and hardware in use at EBC; costs for purchasing software and repairing hardware; and fees for the Internet service on which the Elections BC website is hosted.

Note 6 - Event readiness includes expenses necessary to ensure that EBC maintains a constant state of readiness to administer unscheduled electoral events such as initiative petitions, recall petitions, assent voting and by-elections. Expenses include the printing of forms and guides.

Note 7 - Address and boundary maintenance involves the upkeep of voting area boundaries to satisfy legislative requirements and to enhance the accessibility of voting places to voters. It also includes the production of high quality electoral data and information through the continual custodianship of a geo-spatial database containing B.C.'s electoral boundaries, road network and address data. This means to accurately and efficiently derive physical addresses from provided addresses and assign physical addresses to electoral districts and voting areas; to maintain a current and complete register of physical addresses for residential and non-residential properties, along with their electoral district and voting area assignments; and to communicate this electoral information through map products and web tools.

Note 8 - Voters list maintenance includes information technology costs and costs related to the transfer of voter data. The voters list contains the names and residential addresses of all individuals registered to vote in each electoral district. It is a fundamental component of all electoral events and is used to ensure only registered voters vote and to prevent voters from voting more than once. It is also used to ensure that only registered voters sign recall and initiative petitions. The voters list is used by MLAs, parties and candidates to communicate with registered voters and by the Court Services Branch to generate jury selection lists.

Note 9 - Political entity reporting includes the costs associated with reviewing financing reports for provincial candidates and other political entities; conducting investigations of political entities, candidates and election advertising sponsors in accordance with section 276 of the *Election Act*; development and delivery of guides, forms and training for political entities, financial agents and auditors; registration and updates of political parties, constituency associations and advertising sponsors.

Note 10 - The salary of the Chief Electoral Officer is established by the *Election Act* and is equal to the salary paid to the Chief Judge.

Note 11 - Elections BC recognizes a key factor to youth democratic engagement and civic participation is youth voter registration and ensuring citizens take advantage of their first opportunities to vote. The prescribed learning outcomes of Social Studies 11 and Civics 11 provide the last public school educational opportunity for youth to learn about democracy, electoral history and voting that form the foundations and building blocks of active citizenship. Developing the democratic commitment and capacity of B.C.'s educators to engage students is the focus of Democracy Bootcamp, which will be offered in both 2016 and 2017 during the lead-up to the 2017 Provincial General Election. The Bootcamp is designed to engage and motivate practicing teachers to improve their delivery the prescribed learning outcomes and resource activities, while further developing their overall knowledge of and interest in B.C.'s electoral processes.

Appendices

Appendix A: "At-a-glance" projects and activities, 2015/16

Appendix B: Political party registrations and deregistrations

Appendix C: Constituency association registrations and deregistrations

Appendix D: Orders of the Chief Electoral Officer

Appendix E: Activities of the Chief Electoral Officer

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Appendix G: Maple Ridge-Mission recall petition

Appendix H: Burnaby North recall petition

Appendix I: Minutes of the Election Advisory Committee meeting

Appendix A: "At-a-glance" projects and activities, 2015/16

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	OBJECTIVES AND PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
Top priority: **Deliver events**: Be ready for, and successfully deliver, electoral events.	▪ Deliver the 2015 Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation Plebiscite event. ▪ Administer recall petitions, local by-elections, and local assent voting as required. ▪ Prepare and plan ahead for the 2016 electoral boundaries redistribution. ▪ Prepare and plan ahead for the 2017 Provincial General Election and enumeration. ▪ Implement changes to policies, plans, and processes to ensure Elections BC is ready to deliver on the provisions mandated by passage of Bill 20 - *Election Amendment Act*. ▪ Maintain functionality of critical information systems: Electoral Information System (EIS), Recall and Initiative Verification System (RIVERS), Online Voter Registration (OVR) system, Financial Reports and Political Contributions (FRPC) system, Geographical Information System (GIS), Inventory Distribution System (IDS).	▪ Review and update plans to ensure Elections BC is ready to administer on-demand events, including: ▪ initiative petitions, ▪ recall petitions, ▪ provincial by-elections, ▪ provincial referenda, plebiscites, and initiative votes ▪ local by-elections, ▪ local assent voting.
Supporting priority: **Lead change**: Develop voting model changes that enhance service, remove participation barriers and improve compliance.	▪ Develop a transformative vision of what voting in the 2021 Provincial General Election could look like and work on initiatives to further this vision. ▪ Improve the model for administering voter registration and voting opportunities at site-based voting area (SVA) facilities. ▪ Automate administrative procedures, as allowable by current legislation, to streamline the voting process for voters.	▪ Conduct a strategic review of voter registration and voters list maintenance activities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	OBJECTIVES AND PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
Supporting priority: **Focus on stakeholders**: Respond to the diverse and changing needs of stakeholders.	▪ Design and build a system for provincial candidates to file election financing reports electronically. ▪ Develop a long-term strategy for the evolution of Elections BC's online service offerings from a client-focused perspective. ▪ Adapt the current Financial Reports and Political Contributions system to accommodate the reporting of local campaign contributions. ▪ Develop a strategy to improve the accessibility of data published by Elections BC as desired by data users.	▪ Deliver financial agent training and political party information sessions. ▪ Publish guides to legislated processes administered by Elections BC. ▪ Update forms and information systems used to interact with voters and clients. ▪ Liaise and consult with the Election Advisory Committee. ▪ Liaise and consult with the Technical Advisory Committee established under the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*. ▪ Maintain and enhance public education programs. ▪ Publish political contributions data. ▪ Receive, scan and post financing reports and disclosure statements. ▪ Conduct detailed compliance reviews of financing reports and disclosure statements. ▪ Deliver geography products and services. ▪ Provide voters lists for purposes authorized under the *Election Act*. ▪ Manage issues and media relations. ▪ Maintain the Elections BC website and update public information. ▪ Respond to inquiries from the public and other stakeholders. ▪ Conduct client satisfaction surveys.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	OBJECTIVES AND PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
Supporting priority: **Enhance value**: Enhance value for British Columbians by engaging in partnerships and innovative service delivery arrangements that leverage our expertise.	▪ Actively support the work of the British Columbia Electoral Boundaries Commission. ▪ Develop an outreach strategy in consultation with youth organizations and other partners that will inform a province-wide youth awareness campaign for the 2017 Provincial General Election. ▪ Improve the accessibility of Elections BC's teacher resources aimed at introducing youth to the importance of participating in the electoral process.	▪ Participate in research activities relevant to electoral administration. ▪ Develop and maintain partnerships. ▪ Observe electoral events taking place in other jurisdictions. ▪ Deliver presentations to external groups.

FOUNDATIONAL AREAS: SUPPORTING OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
People: Continue to be a high-performing organization that invests in people, ensuring our staff have the knowledge, capabilities and resilience to serve the needs of our stakeholders.	▪ Implement new training programs for District Electoral Officers and election officials, taking a blended learning approach that combines face-to-face instruction and eLearning. ▪ Enhance the suite of information resources, communications technology, and performance management tools used by District Electoral Officers in the field. ▪ Partner with other Canadian jurisdictions to establish a professional education and certification program in election administration.	▪ Train staff on planning framework tools and processes. ▪ Manage corporate orientation program for new Elections BC employees. ▪ Develop and maintain staff. ▪ Maintain Employee Performance and Development Planning (EPDP) program.

FOUNDATIONAL AREAS: SUPPORTING OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
Work environment and tools: Create a healthy and productive work environment that supports our staff with the information, tools and resources they need to perform at their best.	▪ Evaluate the information resources used by Elections BC staff when engaging with the public during electoral events and assess needs for future events. ▪ Re-design the EIS Temporary Employee application to improve coordination of election official recruitment, training, scheduling, and payroll functions. ▪ Extend the functionality of Elections BC's Inventory Distribution System and modify related business processes to improve the management of supplies provided to district electoral offices and voting places. ▪ Enhance the information systems used for internal reporting on Elections BC operations during electoral event periods.	▪ Maintain IT infrastructure. ▪ Manage warehouse. ▪ Maintain and administer facilities.
Approach: Put in place effective business processes and management structures so that our work reflects best practices, uses resources wisely and aligns with our vision, mandate and strategic direction.	▪ Renew Elections BC's strategic plan for 2015-2021. ▪ Implement a formal privacy management framework for Elections BC. ▪ Develop new geography products and services needed to support the 2017 Provincial General Election. ▪ Analyse voter participation trends and patterns to improve operational and logistical planning in the field. ▪ Evaluate the technology used by Elections BC to develop learning and training resources on multimedia platforms and assess whether new capacity is needed.	▪ Incorporate lessons learned from past electoral events into future event planning. ▪ Maintain and enhance Elections BC's planning framework. ▪ Maintain policies, procedures, and process documentation. ▪ Review legislation and legislative interpretations. ▪ Maintain risk management program.

FOUNDATIONAL AREAS: SUPPORTING OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	PROJECTS	ONGOING WORK
Communications: Maintain an active presence with our internal and external stakeholders and strategic partners, always seeking opportunities to work collaboratively, build relationships and share lessons learned.	▪ Conduct a competitive process to select Elections BC's advertising agency of record. ▪ Take a fresh look at the purpose, format, and content of Elections BC's Report of the Chief Electoral Officer publications from a stakeholder communications perspective. ▪ Redesign website to improve user experience and access to electoral information.	▪ Liaise with other electoral agencies to share best practices. ▪ Engage with legislators and other stakeholders on emerging issues of concern to electoral administrators. ▪ Participate in the Conference of Canadian Election Officials (CCEO). ▪ Participate in the Council on Governmental Ethics Laws (COGEL). ▪ Contribute to the Canadian Electoral Resource Library (CERL). ▪ Maintain and enhance intranet and internal communications.

Appendix B: Political party registrations and deregistrations

As of March 31, 2015, there were 23 political parties registered in B.C.

The following political party registrations and deregistrations occurred between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015.

Political party registrations

- British Columbia Peoples Party
- Vancouver Island Party of British Columbia

Voluntary political party deregistrations

- Advocational International Democratic Party of British Columbia

Appendix C: Constituency association registrations and deregistrations

As of March 31, 2015, there were 125 constituency associations registered in B.C.

The following constituency association registrations and deregistrations occurred between April 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015.

Constituency association registrations

There were no constituency association registrations in fiscal 2014/15.

Voluntary constituency association deregistrations

British Columbia Conservative Party

- Abbotsford South Constituency Association
- Burnaby North Constituency Association
- Kamloops-North Thompson Constituency Association
- Kamloops-South Thompson Constituency Association
- Kelowna-Lake Country Constituency Association
- Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows Constituency Association
- North Vancouver-Lonsdale Constituency Association
- Port Coquitlam Constituency Association
- Stikine Constituency Association
- Vancouver-False Creek Constituency Association
- Vancouver-Quilchena Constituency Association
- Victoria-Swan Lake Constituency Association
- West Vancouver-Capilano Constituency Association
- West Vancouver-Sea to Sky Constituency Association

Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

- Vancouver-False Creek Constituency Association

Appendix D: Orders of the Chief Electoral Officer

Section 280 of the *Election Act* and section 90 of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* establish the authority of the Chief Electoral Officer to make specific or general Orders under certain circumstances. Between April 1, 2014, and March 31, 2015, three Orders were made by the Chief Electoral Officer. The Orders are summarized below:

EA-ORD003-2014[1]
September 16, 2014

The British Columbia Conservative Party was granted an extension to October 31, 2014, to file deregistration reports for the Surrey-Cloverdale Constituency Association British Columbia Conservative Party.

LECFA-ORD001-2015
February 13, 2015

Due to extraordinary circumstances seven local elections candidates and one third party sponsor were unable to file their disclosure statements by the deadline of February 13, 2015. Rob Bottos (SD 43 - Coquitlam School District) was granted an extension to February 20, 2015. Kendal Csak (Nanaimo) and Rayman Bhuller (SD 36 - Surrey School District) were granted extensions to February 27, 2015. Paul DeVito (Colwood), John York (Cranbrook), Gordon Fuller (Nanaimo), and Eleanor Hadley (Vancouver) were granted extensions until March 16, 2015. The Nanaimo District Teachers' Association was granted an extension to February 20, 2015.

EA-ORD001-2015
March 31, 2015

The British Columbia Conservative Party was granted an extension to April 7, 2015, to file the annual financial report for the 2014 calendar year for the North Vancouver-Seymour Constituency Association British Columbia Conservative Party.

[1] Orders are numbered by calendar year rather than fiscal year.

Appendix E: Activities of the Chief Electoral Officer

The Chief Electoral Officer and his senior staff meet regularly with a wide variety of stakeholders. The following are some examples of the meetings, activities or events that were held or attended in the last year.

- Advisory Committee of Electoral Partners
- British Columbia Electoral Boundaries Commission hearings and deliberations
- Canadian Political Science Association Annual Conference
- Chief Electoral Officer Committee on Professional Training
- Citizens' Assembly 10th Anniversary Celebration
- Conference of Canadian Election Officials
- Council on Governmental Ethics Laws Conference
- Democracy Bootcamp
- Elections Alberta Visitor's Program
- Elections Canada Workshop on Returning Officer training
- Election Advisory Committee meeting
- Presentation at the Local Government Management Association Election Workshops
- Presentation on the role of Elections BC to the British Columbia Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy
- Presentation to first year political science students at Simon Fraser University
- Presentation at the Public Opinion and Parties Conference of the British Political Studies Association
- Referendum on Scotland's Independence
- Union of British Columbia Municipalities Convention
- Workshops on Social Science Research, Concordia University

Appendix F: Reports of the Chief Electoral Officer

The following is a list of reports and publications Elections BC tabled in the last fiscal year. These reports are available on the Elections BC website.

Reports of the Chief Electoral Officer

Report of the Chief Electoral Officer on Recommendations for Legislative Change – October 2014

Annual report 2013/14 and Service Plan 2014/15-2016/17

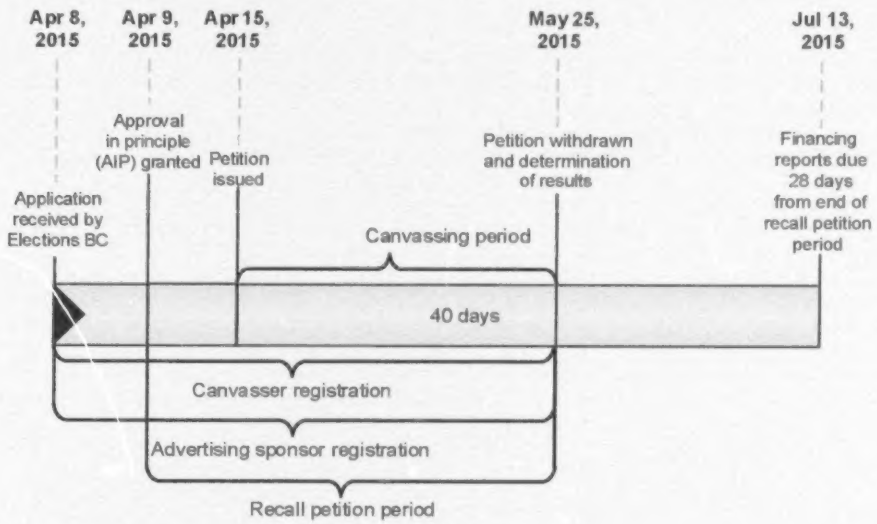
Appendix G: Maple Ridge-Mission recall petition

The application of the proponent, Yvonne Hale, for the recall of Marc Dalton, MLA was received on April 8, 2015, and was approved in principle by the Chief Electoral Officer on April 9, 2015.[1] The petition was issued to the proponent on April 15, 2015. The recall petition expenses limit for the proponent and MLA was $37,365.92. This amount is based on the total number of registered voters as of May 14, 2013. A total of 115 voters registered as canvassers to collect signatures for the petition over a 60-day period.

The petition application was withdrawn on May 25, 2015. Upon receiving that notice, the Chief Electoral Officer cancelled the recall petition and on May 25, 2015 notified the proponent, the Member and the Speaker of this determination.

Voter count	Threshold	Returned signatures	Rejected signatures	Verified signatures	Threshold met
38,523	15,410	930[2]	N/A	N/A	No

Elections BC incurred costs of $3,739 to administer the recall petition.



Timeline of the Maple Ridge-Mission recall petition

1. Although this recall petition occurred after the end of the 2014/15 fiscal year, we report on it here in the interest of timeliness.
2. The petition application was withdrawn prior to the end of the recall petition period and so the recall petition was cancelled by the Chief Electoral Offficer.

Registered recall advertising sponsors must file a detailed recall advertising disclosure report with the Chief Electoral Officer if the total value of advertising sponsored is $500 or more. The Maple Ridge Teacher's Association indicated that they did not sponsor recall advertising with a value of $500 or more.

Recall petition financial report summary

Proponent	**Yvonne Hale**
	$
Inflows	
Contributions	
Individuals	1,748
Corporations	-
Unincorporated businesses/commercial organizations	-
Trade unions	36
Non-profit organizations	-
Other identifiable contributors	-
Anonymous contributions	82
Total contributions	**1,866**
Fundraising income	-
Other income	-
Loans received	-
Total inflows	**1,866**
Outflows	
Recall petition expenses subject to limits	1,536
Recall petition expenses not subject to limits	287
Other expenses	43
Total outflows	**1,866**
Recall petition expenses limit	**37,365.92**

Recall petition financial report summary

MLA	Marc Dalton
	$
Inflows	
Contributions	
Individuals	600
Corporations	-
Unincorporated businesses/commercial organizations	-
Trade unions	-
Non-profit organizations	-
Other identifiable contributors	4,938
Anonymous contributions	-
Total contributions	**5,538**
Fundraising income	-
Other income	-
Loans received	-
Total inflows	**5,538**
Outflows	
Recall petition expenses subject to limits	5,538
Recall petition expenses not subject to limits	-
Other expenses	-
Total outflows	**5,538**
Recall petition expenses limit	**37,365.92**

Elections BC expenses

The following expenses were incurred by Elections BC in administering the Maple Ridge-Mission recall petition.

Expense categories	Fiscal year 2015/2016 $
Information systems	1,685
Professional services	562
Advertising and publications	1,959
General office expenses	95
Total	**4,301**

Total number of registered voters on September 9, 2013	**38,523**

Cost per registered voter	**$ 0.11**

Recall petition sheet

ELECTIONS BC

RECALL PETITION SHEET

962 (10/11)

MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BEING RECALLED	ELECTORAL DISTRICT	PETITION NUMBER
Marc Dalton	Maple Ridge-Mission	RP-MRM-2015-001

NOTE TO SIGNERS Be sure to read the attached cover sheet before signing this petition. You may be contacted to confirm that you signed this petition. Use the **residential address** where you are registered as a voter under the *Election Act*. **Postal addresses will not be accepted.**

PLEASE PRINT We, the undersigned, declare our support of this petition. We are qualified to sign this petition and **have not previously signed**.

	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME (S)	LAST NAME	SIGNATURE	I request that my address and phone number be removed from public inspection
e.g.	GEORGE	DAVID	REYNOLDS	GDReynolds	
	APT / UNIT / NUMBER / STREET	CITY / TOWN	PHONE		
	201 12455 GRANDVILLE ST	VANCOUVER	604-123-4567		
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					

ELECTIONS BC OFFICE USE ONLY

I declare that I am a registered canvasser of this petition and that each signature on this page was signed in my presence, was not obtained through fraud, deceit or misrepresentation and was obtained by me on the canvass date noted below. To the best of my knowledge and belief, each signature is the genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be and the person who signed the petition was qualified to do so.

NAME OF CANVASSER (PRINT)	CANVASSER NUMBER			
SIGNATURE OF CANVASSER	YYYY	MM	DD	

CANVASSER:
You must sign and date the petition sheets daily.

Failure to comply with the legislated responsibilities of a canvasser is a serious offence. Any individual or organization who commits such an offence is liable to fines up to $10,000 and/or imprisonment.
[Recall and Initiative Act, s. 160, 162]

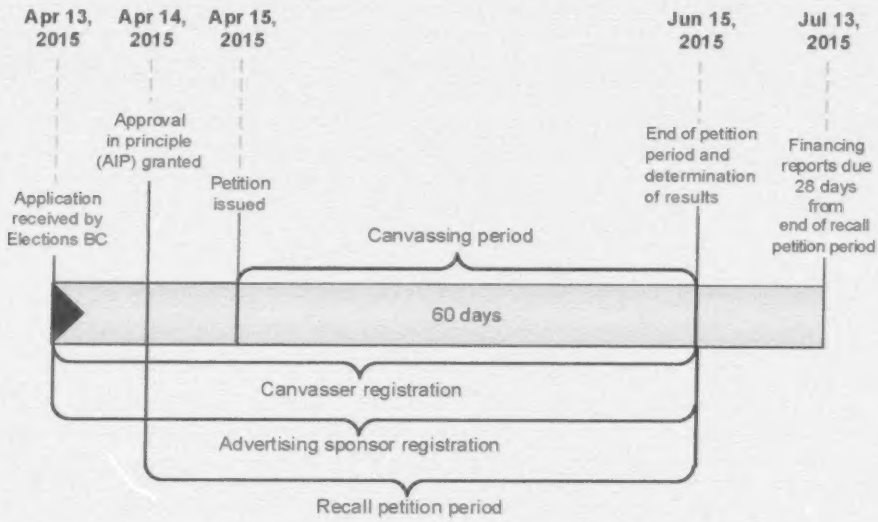
Appendix H: Burnaby North recall petition

The application of the proponent, Loren Letourneau, for the recall of Richard T. Lee, MLA was received on April 13, 2015, and was approved in principle by the Chief Electoral Officer on April 14, 2015.[1] The petition was issued to the proponent on April 15, 2015. The recall petition expenses limit for the proponent and MLA was $38,257.91. This amount is based on the total number of registered voters as of May 14, 2013. A total of 89 voters registered as canvassers to collect signatures for the petition over a 60-day period.

The proponent did not submit the recall petition by the end of the 60 day recall petition period. The Chief Electoral Officer determined on June 15, 2015 that the petition did not meet the requirements of the *Recall and Initiative Act* and therefore failed. On June 16, 2015 the Chief Electoral Officer notified the proponent, the Member and the Speaker of this determination.

Voter count	Threshold	Returned signatures	Rejected signatures	Verified signatures	Threshold met
41,233	16,494	1,551	N/A	N/A	No

Elections BC incurred costs of $3,924 to administer the recall.



Timeline for Burnaby North recall petition

1. Although this recall petition occurred after the end of the 2014/15 fiscal year, we report on it here in the interest of timeliness.

There were no registered recall advertising sponsors in the Burnaby North recall petition.

Recall petition financial report summary

Proponent	Loren Letourneau
	$
Inflows	
Contributions	
Individuals	1,256
Corporations	-
Unincorporated businesses/commercial organizations	-
Trade unions	900
Non-profit organizations	-
Other identifiable contributors	-
Anonymous contributions	
Total contributions	**2,156**
Fundraising income	-
Other income	-
Loans received	-
Total inflows	**2,156**
Outflows	
Recall petition expenses subject to limits	2,132
Recall petition expenses not subject to limits	50
Other expenses	-
Total outflows	**2,182**
Recall petition expenses limit	**38,257.91**

Recall petition financial report summary

MLA	Richard T. Lee
	$
Inflows	
Contributions	
Individuals	-
Corporations	-
Unincorporated businesses/commercial organizations	-
Trade unions	-
Non-profit organizations	-
Other identifiable contributors	26,060
Anonymous contributions	-
Total contributions	**26,060**
Fundraising income	-
Other income	2
Loans received	-
Total inflows	**26,062**
Outflows	
Recall petition expenses subject to limits	11,775
Recall petition expenses not subject to limits	-
Other expenses	14,287
Total outflows	**26,062**
Recall petition expenses limit	**38,257.91**

Elections BC expenses

The following expenses were incurred by Elections BC in administering the Burnaby North recall petition.

Expense categories	Fiscal year 2015/2016
	$
Information Systems	1,685
Professional Services	431
Advertising and publications	2,126
General office expenses	130
Total	**4,372**

Total number of registered voters on September 9, 2013	**41,233**

Cost per registered voter	**$ 0.11**

Recall petition sheet

ELECTIONS BC
A non-partisan Office of the Legislature

RECALL PETITION SHEET

962 (15/03)

MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BEING RECALLED	ELECTORAL DISTRICT	PETITION NUMBER
Richard T. Lee	Burnaby North	RP-BNN-2015-002

NOTE TO SIGNERS Be sure to read the attached cover sheet before signing this petition. You may be contacted to confirm that you signed this petition. Use the **residential address** where you are registered as a voter under the *Election Act*. **Postal addresses will not be accepted.**

PLEASE PRINT We, the undersigned, declare our support of this petition. We are qualified to sign this petition and have not previously signed.

	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME (S)	LAST NAME	SIGNATURE	I request that my address and phone number be obscured from public inspection.
e.g	GEORGE	DAVID	REYNOLDS	GDReynolds	
	APT / UNIT / NUMBER / STREET	CITY / TOWN	PHONE		
	201 12455 GRANDVILLE ST	VANCOUVER	604-123-4567		
1					
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10					

ELECTIONS BC OFFICE USE ONLY

I declare that I am a registered canvasser of this petition and that each signature on this page was signed in my presence, was not obtained through fraud, deceit or misrepresentation and was obtained by me on the canvass date noted below. To the best of my knowledge and belief, each signature is the genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be and the person who signed the petition was qualified to do so.

NAME OF CANVASSER (PRINT)	CANVASSER NUMBER			
SIGNATURE OF CANVASSER	YYYY	MM	DD	

CANVASSER:
You must sign and date the petition sheets daily.

Failure to comply with the legislated responsibilities of a canvasser is a serious offence. Any individual or organization who commits such an offence is liable to fines up to $10,000 and/or imprisonment. [Recall and Initiative Act, s. 159, 162]

Appendix I: Minutes of the Election Advisory Committee meeting

Tuesday, September 30, 2014, 10 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.
Delta Vancouver Suites, 550 West Hastings St., Vancouver, British Columbia

Present:
Committee Members (alphabetically by political party name)
Michael Gardiner, BC NDP
Raj Sihota, BC NDP
Jeff Bridge, British Columbia Conservative Party
Laura Miller, British Columbia Liberal Party
Sharon White, British Columbia Liberal Party
Bob Lorriman, Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Elections BC Staff
Keith Archer, Ph.D., Chief Electoral Officer (Chair)
Nola Western, CPA, CA, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Funding and Disclosure
Anton Boegman, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Electoral Operations
Amie Foster, Manager, Executive Services (minutes)

Regrets:
Marcus Madsen, Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

Meeting convened at 10:01 a.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Keith Archer, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) welcomed attendees and described the role of the Election Advisory Committee (EAC) in relation to the process for tabling recommendations for legislative change as defined by section 12 of the *Election Act*. He explained that a review of the *Election Act* is possible, and that as a result Elections BC (EBC) intends to proceed with recommendations for legislative change on October 9. Substantial recommendations (still under development) are expected in 2015.

Keith then described the general role of the EAC as defined by sections 14-16 of the *Election Act*.

Discussion Questions

- What process follows the tabling of recommendations in the Legislative Assembly?
  - Once tabled, the Legislative Assembly can consider and/or adopt any recommendations for legislative change. In recent years only one recommendation has been adopted. That change removed the requirement for a province-wide door-to-door enumeration prior to a provincial general election.

2. Recommendations for legislative change

Keith led members through a review of the suite of recommendations for legislative change expected to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 9, 2014.

Recommendation 1
Facilitating youth participation

The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that legislators consider allowing the provisional registration of individuals when they are 16 years of age. The voting age would remain at 18, with provisional registration becoming an active registration on an individual's 18th birthday. Permitting early registration at the age of 16 would permit Elections BC to work with schools and the driver licensing program to ensure maximum exposure to the registration process for young voters. Many high school teachers have expressed support for this concept as it would allow meaningful action by their students in the context of civics education. Improving the accessibility of registration opportunities for youth may have a longer-term effect on voter engagement and turnout.

Discussion Questions

- Do other jurisdictions in Canada have similar provisions?
  - Nova Scotia and Quebec have similar provisions and Alberta is also working in this direction. Nine American states also allow provisional voter registration.
- Have there been any studies to show that this approach is effective?
  - There was a study in Australia, however because Australia has mandatory participation, it is not a perfect comparison. Anecdotally Quebec and Prince Edward Island have higher turnout across all age groups.

Action - Keith Archer will look for additional studies regarding provisional registration for young people and will share his findings with the EAC.

- A member observed that EBC has raised this recommendation three times. The member asked why it had not yet been adopted.
  - The current environment demonstrates that this is a good time to bring this recommendation forward. The health of a democracy depends on a good level of participation. In addition, research has shown that voting (or not voting) is habitual and therefore encouraging young electors to develop good habits of participation will have long-term positive effects.
- Would this change permit EBC to work with schools? Would there be a process for data sharing?
  - Data sharing is possible but not yet well defined. This mandate would facilitate work in support of this kind of outcome.

- Would this recommendation include a check-box on the drivers licence application which would provide consent or would it simply involve the collection of data that would be used to reach-out to young people to obtain consent when they come of age. A member questioned whether it would be legally appropriate for a 16 year old to consent.
  - The specific details are yet to be finalized. Elections BC would await direction from any legislation.
- Members were asked whether they would support the recommendation.
  - The general consensus was that the EAC would support efforts to engage younger voters and enhance the voters list. Some expressed caution with the legality of consent, the structure of the process, and the sharing of data.

Recommendation 2
New voting technologies

The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that legislators consider providing greater flexibility to the Chief Electoral Officer to introduce, on a pilot basis, a variety of new voting technologies. These could include, for example, technologies that provide increased accessibility for voters with disabilities (e.g. "sip and puff" ballot marking devices), or optical ballot scanners to allow more efficient results reporting.

Elections BC endorses the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Internet Voting as described in the panel's recommendations report submitted to the Legislative Assembly earlier this year.

Discussion

- Has participation has gone up, down, or stayed the same in jurisdictions with Internet voting?
  - The evidence shows that the effects of Internet voting on voter turnout are mixed and that it is not the panacea for voting participation that many believe. There is uncertainty regarding cost. Internet voting is typically conducted in conjunction with traditional paper voting which results in no cost savings.
- The Chief Electoral Officer was asked to confirm that there was no consideration for Internet voting in 2017.
  - Keith Archer confirmed that there was no intention to proceed with Internet voting in 2017.
- The Chief Electoral Officer was asked to describe the recent counting issues in New Brunswick, and whether the lack of a pilot was the cause of these issues.

- Anton Boegman described duplicate systems providing different results on the live server, and explained that that would not occur in BC as we have different processes.

- Anton Boegman was asked what processes were in place in the City of Vancouver in relation to tabulation machines.
  - Anton Boegman explained that Elections BC has no role in administering the vote in local elections and noted that the voting area distribution in a provincial election and in a city election are quite different.

Recommendation 3
Flexibility for advance voting opportunities

The Chief Electoral Officer recommends that legislators consider providing greater flexibility to District Electoral Officers to establish advance voting opportunities on any of the days of the advance voting period, or for a limited number of hours during the day. To ensure this provision is applied carefully and consistently, the limited opportunities would require the prior approval of the Chief Electoral Officer. Advance voting opportunities available for other than the full four-day period would be clearly identified as such in communications to voters, candidates and political parties.

Discussion Questions

- A member confirmed that this recommendation would allow greater flexibility in smaller centres, particularly those that cannot support four full days of advance voting.
  - Confirmed by the CEO.

- A member agreed with the spirit of the recommendation, but expressed concern with the possibility of unequal access for all voters, especially if the practical application involved the discretion of different District Electoral Officers. The member also asked whether Elections BC is recommending additional days of advance voting.
  - The District Electoral Officers must submit a work plan which is reviewed centrally to ensure that equitable access to voting opportunities is maintained.

- A member explained that they would be more comfortable with this recommendation if there were specific parameters in place to define where these opportunities occur.
  - Guidelines will be provided to DEOs by the CEO. However, the diverse characteristics of each electoral district mean that a "one-size" approach will not best serve all voters. Approval by the CEO of these opportunities will ensure equitable administration of these opportunities.

- Will this recommendation apply to advance voting only?
  - This recommendation would apply to advance voting only.

- Could "greater flexibility" include Internet voting?
  - These are stand-alone recommendations. The Act does not currently permit Internet voting.

Technical Recommendations
Inconsistent requirements for proving identity (s. 41.1)

When election officials administer vouching they are administering a statutory declaration that has full effect in law. The provincial standards established by the Ministry of Justice for taking statutory declarations establish that the person administering the declaration must be satisfied as to the identity of the person making the statement. While an individual vouching in the "friend" category of voucher has to provide identification, a voucher in the "family" or "personal care" categories does not have to establish their identity. This inconsistency can result in a perception that vouching is open to abuse. By making all vouchers have to prove their identity, this inconsistency would be removed, and the process of administering vouching would be standardized.

Recommendation:
Amend s. 41.1(2)(b)(ii) and (iii) such that individuals vouching for voters under these categories must prove their identity by producing their own identity documents similar to s. 41.1(2)(b)(i).

Discussion Questions

- How was this left out when the legislation was drafted?
  - It was not necessarily an error. The legislation was drafted to ensure three classes of vouching and the processes for each are slightly different.

Specific authority to provide voter turnout information to candidates (ss. 96, 97)

Candidates play an important role in voter participation. During voting proceedings, candidate representatives observe voting, track who has already voted, and feed that information into their "get-out-the-vote" effort. Concurrent with declining voter participation, candidates have also experienced challenges in finding sufficient volunteers to act as candidate representatives, which has impacted their ability to effectively perform this function.

Candidate representatives have the authority to observe and inspect voting documents during voting proceedings. Elections BC however does not have the authority to create records on voter turnout and provide these to candidate representatives. Elections Canada and most Canadian provincial election agencies have legislation authorizing the production of turnout records (e.g. "Bingo Cards") during voting.

Recommendation:

Amend s. 96(3)(b) to authorize an election official to provide to a candidate representative, as directed by the Chief Electoral Officer, a written record of the voter sequence numbers of voters who have voted, excepting new registrations.

Amend s. 97 to authorize the District Electoral Officer to send to each candidate, at the end of each advance voting day and as directed by the Chief Electoral Officer, the voter sequence number of each voter who has voted, excepting new registrations.

Discussion

- Anton Boegman explained that EBC has spent more than a year developing a privacy management framework. As part of this process EBC determined that the organization does not have the legal authority to disclose participation records. At the same time EBC understands the challenges political parties face in collecting information regarding who has voted.
- A member observed that at the last EAC meeting all parties indicated that they wanted participation extracts. The member asked Anton whether this recommendation would result in a list of participation following the event. The member also added that Ontario provides this information to political parties.
  - This recommendation is designed to assist with "get out the vote efforts" and as that requirement ends after the election, there is no intention to include a recommendation for an extract after General Voting Day.
- A member explained that all parties are interested in obtaining a participation list after an event.
  - The CEO acknowledged that this was requested two years ago, and that Elections BC had agreed to look in to the matter further. He added that research and legal advice indicated that legislative change would be required to produce such extracts.
- A member explained that having a complete list is a tool that allows parties to engage voters on an ongoing basis. The member added that an extract should be available on an ongoing basis and that a final extract should be produced for parties after the event.
- Members reinforced that they would like to go back to their ground-teams before providing additional feedback.

Fundraising function expenses (s. 200)

Section 200 of the *Election Act* stipulates that a registered constituency association must not incur an election expense unless the expense is incurred on behalf of a selected candidate, and the expense is incurred during the period between when the election is called (Writ Day) and when the individual becomes a candidate.

An election expense is defined in s.183 as "the value of property or services used within the period beginning 60 days before a campaign period and ending at the end of the campaign period by or on behalf of a candidate, registered constituency association or registered political party...." In addition, s. 203(1)(f) states that expenses incurred in holding a fundraising function are election expenses, (although they are not subject to the spending limits). Therefore, a registered constituency association cannot hold fundraising functions during the 60 day pre-campaign period or the campaign period except for the few days between Writ Day and when the candidate receives their certificate of candidacy.

Recommendation:

Amend s. 200 to specifically allow constituency associations to incur election expenses related to fundraising functions during the 60 day pre-campaign period. The expenses could still be attributed to the candidate, as required by s. 200(3).

Discussion Questions

- No questions were raised.

Leadership contestant financing report thresholds (s. 211)

Currently every time a political party selects a new leader, a leadership contestant financing report is required to be filed within 90 days. The report is required by the contestant even if there is only one contestant, the leader is selected by acclamation, and no money was received or spent in relation to the event.

Recommendation:

Amend s. 211 to only require a leadership contestant financing report if there is more than one leadership contestant or if a certain amount has been spent in relation to the contest.

Discussion

- A member questioned how Elections BC would handle a situation where there was only one candidate at the time of the leadership election.
  - The test should be two-pronged. It would require that no money be spent/ received and that the individual be made leader by acclamation. It would primarily benefit smaller parties.
- A member explained that simplifying the process seemed like a positive step, when the appropriate conditions have been met.
  - The Chief Electoral Officer added "I hear you saying, don't make this a loophole that others can use." Members confirmed the statement.
- A member expressed appreciation for the simplified list of priority recommendations.

3. Electoral Boundaries Commission Update

Keith Archer provided attendees with an electoral boundaries commission update. He explained that for the first time in B.C. the commission will be hosted by Elections BC. This format is expected to be substantially less costly, more efficient, and will allow the commission to benefit from the in-house expertise at Elections BC.

Keith shared that the hearings to date (Prince Rupert, Smithers, Terrace, Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek, Prince George, Quesnel, and Williams Lake) have been lightly attended with six or fewer attendees at each. Nine of 36 hearings are now complete, and details of the remaining hearings are available at www.bc-ebc.ca. Individuals may also submit feedback via the website through midnight on November 16. All oral presentations and written submissions will be made public.

The preliminary report will be published no later than May 9, 2015, followed by a second round of hearings. The final report will be published on or before November 9, 2015.

The commission has the authority under the legislation to add up to two additional seats. The legislation also requires the commission to maintain the current number of seats in three "protected northern regions."

The BC Electoral Boundaries Commission commissioned population projections by census blocks for 2014, 2017 and 2021 from BC Stats. These figures will be used by the commission in their decision-making, and will also be available to the public via the commission website (www.bc-ebc.ca) later this week. Keith asked members to note that electoral boundaries do not always follow census blocks and as a result there will be some ongoing and proprietary splitting of census blocks as the commission conducts their work.

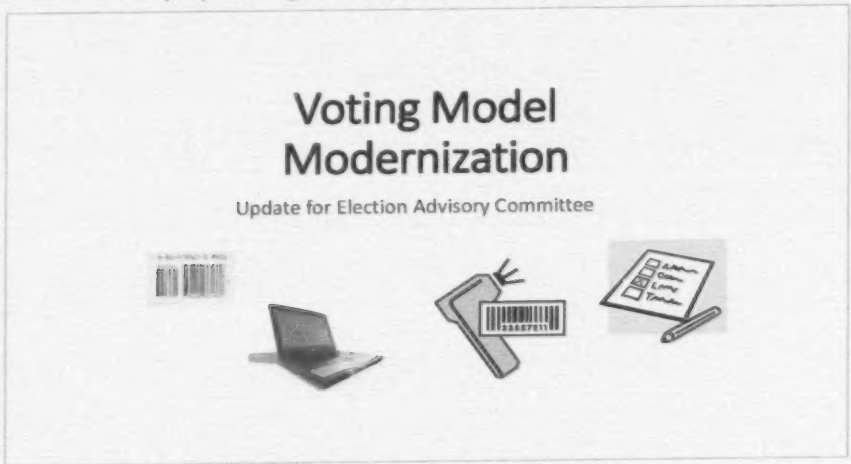
Discussion Questions

- A member suggested that the BC Electoral Boundaries Commission might reach more people if the time and place for hearings were published on Twitter or on other online forums.
    - The CEO confirmed that the BC Electoral Boundaries Commission has a Twitter account and added that the website address for the commission is www.bc-ebc.ca. All submissions (oral at hearings and written) will be published on the site. The CEO also acknowledged the scheduling conflict with the UBCM conference in Whistler last week.
- The CEO was asked whether the commission will invite MLAs to provide comment before the preliminary report is published.
- The legislation requires that the commission conduct a hearing for MLAs after the preliminary report, and before the final report is tabled in the Legislative Assembly. This hearing is expected to be scheduled in June.

- Are the hearings open to individuals from any electoral district?
  - Yes, everyone is welcome. Individuals do not need to be from the district in which the hearing is taking place.
- Which baseline projections will be used to conduct the redistribution, 2014, 2017, or 2021?
  - The commission will likely use the 2014 projections, and be mindful of future projections.

4. Voting Model Modernization

Anton provided attendees with a description of Elections BC's proposed voting model modernization project as guided by the following PowerPoint presentation.[4]



The recommendations are in reaction to the issues that are evident in the current system. In the coming months parties will be given an opportunity to consider these proposed changes and to provide party-specific feedback.

Discussion Questions

- Is B.C.'s declining voter participation present in other Canadian jurisdictions?
  - This is decline is common across most Western democracies, with the exception of Quebec and Prince Edward Island.
- Members noted that they needed time to consider Anton's comments and to provide feedback.

[4] Embedded PowerPoint presentations have been removed. For the original copy of the minutes, including embedded presentations, see the Elections BC website.

- A member explained that any model that eliminates the requirement for a two week delay for final count would be appreciated. Other members concurred.

5. Local Elections Campaign Financing Update

The *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act*, or LECFA, received Royal Assent on May 29. Detailed regulations followed, including an amendment that was deposited on July 28. LECFA makes Elections BC responsible for administering and enforcing the campaign financing and third party advertising provisions for local elections throughout BC. It is a significant mandate change for EBC and affects 257 jurisdictions (e.g. school boards, regional districts, park boards, water boards, Islands Trust, municipalities etc.).

Elections BC is well positioned to take on the new mandate and it is gratifying that the Legislative Assembly has such confidence in Elections BC

Discussion

- No comments or questions were raised.

6. Closing Comments and General Discussion

Keith Archer thanked members for their thoughtful comments and invited final discussion.

Discussion

- No comments or questions were raised.

Keith Archer then reminded members of the following:

- The report on the recommendations for legislative change is going forward and member feedback has been gathered.
- Members will be contacted by Anton Boegman and his team regarding the voting modernization project. Feedback regarding the proposal is welcome.
- Individuals can provide feedback to the boundaries commission through the commission website or in person at public hearings through November 16 at midnight.

Attendees may forward any questions regarding this meeting to Amie Foster, Manager, Executive Services, by phone at 250-952-6226 or by email at amie.foster@elections.bc.ca.

Contact information:

Elections BC
PO Box 9275 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9J6

Phone: 250-387-5305
Toll-free: 1-800-661-8683/TTY 1-888-456-5448
Fax: 250-387-3578 Toll-free fax: 1-866-466-0665

Email: electionsbc@elections.bc.ca
Website: www.elections.bc.ca

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Glossary

Assent voting

Voting on a bylaw or other matter for which a local government is required or authorized to obtain the assent of the electors.

By-election

A local or provincial election other than one conducted as part of a general election.

Electoral district

The province is divided into electoral districts (constituencies or ridings), each returning one Member to the Legislative Assembly.

Enumeration

The registration or confirmation of registration of voters by residence-to-residence visitation or by another method directed or authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer.

General election

Elections called on the same date for all electoral districts in the province to elect all Members of the Legislative Assembly.

General local elections

Elections for Advisory Council Members, Board of Education Trustees, Councillors, Electoral Area Directors, Islands Trust Local Trust Area Trustees, Local Community Commisssioners, Mayors, Park Board Commissioners, Rural Water Councillors and Water Councillors held in the year 2014 and every fourth year after that.

Initiative petition

A petition under the *Recall and Initiative Act* to have a proposed law introduced in the Legislative Assembly.

Initiative vote

If the Select Standing Committee on Legislative Initiatives refers a successful initiative petition and draft Bill to the Chief Electoral Officer, the Chief Electoral Officer must hold an initiative vote under the *Recall and Initiative Act*.

Plebiscite

A plebiscite is a vote on a matter of public concern, conducted under the *Election Act*, and may be binding on government. A plebiscite is held when the Lieutenant Governor in Council (cabinet) directs the Chief Electoral Officer to determine the opinion of voters on a matter of public concern. The government establishes the threshold for success and outcomes of a successful plebiscite.

Recall petition

A petition under the *Recall and Initiative Act* to remove a Member of the Legislative Assembly from office between elections.

Redistribution

A process to change electoral boundaries to account for population changes and other concerns regarding fair and effective representation.

Referendum

If the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers that an expression of public opinion is desirable on any matter of public interest or concern, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may, by Regulation, order that a referendum be conducted under the *Referendum Act*. A referendum is binding on the government that initiated it.

Voters list

The provincial voters list is prepared and maintained by the Chief Electoral Officer and contains the names and residential addresses of registered voters in each electoral district.

Voting area

An electoral district is divided into voting areas for the purpose of assigning voters to voting places.

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